

# GENESIS

(BERE'SHEET)<sup>1</sup>

**CHAPTER 19:1** And two of the messengers came toward Sodom<sup>2</sup> in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. And Lot saw, and he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself down, two nostrils toward the soil.

**2** And he said, “Look! please—my masters, turn aside, please, toward the house of your servant, and lodge, and wash your feet, and you may shoulder up<sup>3</sup> and walk on your way.” And they said, “No, for we will lodge in the wide place.<sup>4</sup>” **3** And he pressed them exceedingly, and they turned aside toward him, and they came toward his house. And he made<sup>5</sup> for them a drink-fest, and he baked matzos<sup>6</sup> and they ate **4** before they lay down. And the men of the city, the men of Sodom, went around<sup>7</sup> the house, from a lad and unto an old man, all the people, from the end.<sup>8</sup> **5** And they called toward Lot, and they said to him, “Where are the men that came toward you tonight? Make them go out<sup>c</sup> toward us and let us know them.” **6** And Lot went out toward them, toward the opening<sup>9</sup> and he shut the door after him.

**7** And he said, “Please!—my brothers, do not cause bad<sup>c</sup>. **8** Look! please—to me are two daughters who have not known a man; let me, please, make them go out<sup>c</sup> toward you, and do to them according to the good in your eyes, only to these men, do not do a thing, inasmuch as they came into the shadow of my rafter.” **9** And they said, “Draw near—over there!” And they said, “This one comes to sojourn, and he will judge—*continually* judge!<sup>10</sup> Now, we will cause bad<sup>c</sup> to you *more than* from<sup>11</sup> them!” And they pressed against the

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<sup>1</sup> The books of the Hebrew Bible are named from their opening words: here *Bere'sheet*, meaning “At *the* first of . . .”

<sup>2</sup> Lit “Sodom-ward.”

<sup>3</sup> I.e., load up, referring to rising early and loading up humans or beasts of burden.

<sup>4</sup> I.e., the street or plaza.

<sup>5</sup> Or “did.”

<sup>6</sup> Unleavened cakes.

<sup>7</sup> I.e., surrounded.

<sup>8</sup> I.e., from the outskirts of the town.

<sup>9</sup> I.e., entrance, perhaps a courtyard, see v. 11.

<sup>10</sup> Double use of the verb indicates duration.

<sup>11</sup> I.e. worse in contrast with (“away from”) them.

man—against Lot, exceedingly, and they drew near to break the door.

**10** And the men sent their hand,<sup>12</sup> and they made Lot come<sup>c</sup> toward themselves, toward the house, and they shut the door. **11** And the men who *were* at the opening of the house, they struck<sup>c13</sup> with dazzling lights, from small and unto large, and they became weary to find the opening. **12** And the men said toward Lot, “Who *is* to you here still?—a *son*-in-law, or your sons, or your daughters, or all that *are* to you in the city—make them go out<sup>c</sup> from the place, **13** for *we* are bringing to ruin this place, for their<sup>m</sup> outcry was large with the face<sup>p</sup> of YHVH, and YHVH has sent<sup>14</sup> us to ruin it.”

**14** And Lot went out, and he spoke toward his *sons*-in-law, the ones taking his daughters, and he said, “Rise, go out from this place, because YHVH is bringing to ruin the city.” And he was as one laughing<sup>15</sup> in the eyes of his *sons*-in-law. **15** And the dawn went up, and the messengers made hurrying<sup>c</sup> with Lot saying, “Rise, take your woman, and your two daughters, the ones who have been found, lest you<sup>s</sup> be swept away in the crookedness<sup>16</sup> of the city. **16** And he delayed, and the men made strong<sup>c</sup> *hold* on his hand, and the hand of his woman, and the hand of his two daughters, as the compassion of YHVH *was* upon him, and they made him go out<sup>c</sup>, and made him rest<sup>c17</sup> outside the city. **17** And it was, as they were making them go out<sup>c</sup>, toward the outside,<sup>18</sup> and he said,<sup>19</sup> “Escape for your life-breath! Do not gaze behind you<sup>s</sup>! And do not stand anywhere in the circuit!<sup>20</sup> Escape toward the mountain, lest you be swept away.” **18** And Lot said toward them, “No, please, ADONAI!<sup>21</sup> **19** Look! please—your servant has found favor in your<sup>s</sup> eyes, and you have made large<sup>c</sup> your loyal-kindness, that you have done with me, by making my life-breath live<sup>c</sup>, and *I* am not able to escape toward the

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<sup>12</sup> I.e., stretched it out.

<sup>13</sup> Lit “caused striking.” The verb is causative, difficult to bring out in English.

<sup>14</sup> Intensive form of the verb (Piel).

<sup>15</sup> The verb, *tzachaq* means “laugh,” but the context must determine whether it is in the sense of playing, mocking, or even sexual joy.

<sup>16</sup> Heb *‘avon* can refer to the deed, or to its “guilt,” in the sense of deserving punishment. The verb means to twist, bend, or turn.

<sup>17</sup> I.e., in the sense of getting relief from the danger.

<sup>18</sup> Lit “outside-ward.”

<sup>19</sup> Syriac and LXX read “they.”

<sup>20</sup> I.e., the Jordan valley, see Gen 13:10-12.

<sup>21</sup> Tradition holds that the original text was actually YHVH. This is one of 134 places where the Sopherim (scribes) of the MT are said to have substituted ADONAI for YHVH, out of reverence for the Divine Name.

mountain, lest the bad join<sup>22</sup> me, and I die. **20** Look! please—this city *is* near to flee—over there, and it *is* a little one.<sup>23</sup> Let me, please, escape over there—*is* it not a little one?—and my life-breath will live.” **21** And he said toward him, “Look!—I have lifted<sup>24</sup> your face<sup>p</sup> also for this thing,<sup>25</sup> so as not to overturn the city of which you speak. **22** Hurry! Escape over there, for I am not able to do a thing until your coming toward there.”<sup>26</sup> Therefore he called the name of the city Zoar.<sup>27</sup> **23** The sun had gone out over the land and Lot came toward Zoar. **24** And YHVH made rain<sup>c</sup> upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah—brimstone and fire with YHVH from the skies. **25** And he overturned these cities, and all the circuit, and the sitters of the cities, and the sprout of the soil.<sup>28</sup> **26** And his woman gazed from behind him—and she became a pillar of salt! **27** And Abraham shouldered up<sup>29</sup> in the morning, toward the place that he stood there, with the face<sup>p</sup> of YHVH. **28** And he gazed down upon the face<sup>p</sup> of Sodom and Gomorrah, and upon all the face<sup>p</sup> of the land of the circuit, and he saw, and look!—the smoke of the land went up as the smoke of a kiln. **29** And it was, in the ruining of ELOHIM of the cities of the circuit, that ELOHIM remembered Abraham, and he sent<sup>30</sup> Lot from the midst of the overturn, in overturning the cities in which Lot sat. **30** And Lot went up from Zoar and he sat in the mountain, and his two daughters *were* with him, for he feared to sit in Zoar, and he sat in the cave—he and his two daughters. **31** And the firstborn said toward the small one,<sup>31</sup> “Our father has become old, and there *is* no man in the land to come upon us, according to the way of all the land. **32** Walk! We will make our father drink<sup>c</sup> wine, and we will lie down with him, and we let live, from our father, a seed.” **33** And they made their father drink<sup>c</sup> wine in that night, and the firstborn came and lay down with her father, and he did not know at her lying down and at her rising. **34** And it was, from a morrow,<sup>32</sup> that the

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<sup>22</sup> In the sense of sticking to, soldering.

<sup>23</sup> Or “it is a little while away,” Heb *mitz ‘ar*.

<sup>24</sup> I.e., accepted you.

<sup>25</sup> I.e., for this reason or cause.

<sup>26</sup> Lit “there-ward.”

<sup>27</sup> Meaning, “little one.”

<sup>28</sup> I.e., vegetation.

<sup>29</sup> I.e., load up, referring to rising early and loading up humans or beasts of burden.

<sup>30</sup> Intensive form of the verb (Piel).

<sup>31</sup> I.e., younger.

<sup>32</sup> I.e., on the next day.

firstborn said toward the small one,<sup>33</sup> “Look!—I lay down last night with my father. We will make him drink<sup>c</sup> wine also tonight, and you come and lie down with him, and we will keep alive, from our father, a seed.” **35** And they made their father also in that night drink<sup>c</sup> wine. And the small one<sup>34</sup> rose and she lay down with him, and he did not know at her lying down and at her rising. **36** And the two daughters of Lot became pregnant from their father. **37** And the firstborn brought forth a son and she called his name Moab. He *is* the father of Moab until this day. **38** And the small one, she also brought forth a son, and she called his name Ben-Ammi. He *is* the father of the sons of Ammon until this day.

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<sup>33</sup> I.e., the younger one.

<sup>34</sup> I.e., the younger one, here and v. 38.